

SECRET **COPIABLE COPY**

SECRET

R.A.# 2005

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Wash. Div. of Op. 204

DATE: Dec. 13 1940
16 March 44

TO : Richard Hartschorne *RH*

FROM : Francis Williamson (Central European Section) *F.W.*

SUBJECT: Request from E.J. Putzell Jr., for information regarding
Bormann. (Request attached).

Martin Bormann occupies at the present time a position as head of the Party Chancellery of the Nazi Party and is a member of the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich. He acts as the Deputy of the Führer. He has been described both as the No. 2 and the No. 3 Nazi, and along with Himmler, Göring, and Goebbels, is alleged to be the fourth member of the group designated to take over the control of Germany in the event of the death of Hitler. Press accounts in Sweden and elsewhere state that Bormann is the most important Nazi next to Hitler.

Life: Bormann, the son of a Lutheran farmer, was born in Halberstadt on June 17, 1900. During the World War, he served in the artillery. After 1918, he became a student of agriculture and was appointed to manage an estate in Mecklenburg. He combined this work with activities in the Free Corps, as a member of the Ehrhardt Brigade and as section leader in the notorious Rossbach Brigade, terroristic military organizations which fought the Weimar Republic. In 1923, while still a member of the Rossbach group, he was convicted of committing a political murder and was sentenced to prison. After serving one year he was released. He immediately joined the Frontbann, as a racial paramilitary organization, and in 1925 became a member of the Nazi Party.

Position in Nazi Party: Bormann's rise to power was rapid in the Nazi Party. Two years after he joined the Party he became the Gau Press Chief (Gaupressobmann) in Thuringia. In 1928 he was appointed district leader and office manager (Bezirksleiter und Gaugeschneftsfuehrer) in the Gau organization of Thuringia. In the same year he was made a member of the staff of the Supreme Command of the SA, a position which he held until 1930. He was also director of the Hilfskasse of the Nazi Party. In 1933, Bormann was made a member of the Reichstag and became Chief of Staff to the Deputy of the Führer, Rudolf Hess (Stabsleiter des Stellvertreters des Fuehrers). Bormann worked with Hess in controlling Party affairs until the latter's flight to England. He holds the rank of Obergruppenfuhrer in both SS and SA, a Senior Group Leader.

After the flight of Hess, the office of Deputy Führer remained vacant. A new office, Leader of the Party Chancellery (Leiter der Parteikanzlei) was created and Bormann was appointed to it. This office gives him complete control over all Nazi Party affairs and the numerous party bureaucracy.

Political Position: The political viewpoint and position of Bormann in Nazi Germany has been made the subject of many rumors. He represents the SS group and since 1942 has purged many government officials, replacing them with SS men. He was reported to be associated with SS extremist factions. His closest friend is alleged to be General Zeitzler, an ardent Nazi who rose to prominence in the German army after the defeat at Stalingrad. Cables from Bern

EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)
☐ (2)(A) Privacy
☒ (2)(B) Methods/Sources
☒ (2)(G) Foreign Relations

Declassified and Approved for Release
by the Central Intelligence Agency
Date: 2001

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

SECRET

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

-2-

SECRET

(OSS 23466, 23771, 23772) in October 1943 state that Bormann was associated with Göring in sponsoring peace proposals to the Soviet Union and that he has quarrelled with von Ribbentrop over German foreign policy. In internal affairs, Bormann has advocated complete SS control in Germany. He represents the pagan group and has always shown a violent opposition to religion. His reputation as an ardent Nazi is not only demonstrated by his prominent position in the Party, but also by his record of violence and murder in politics which dates officially from the time he was nineteen years old.

SECRET